

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01  
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02  
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USMISSION USUN NEW YORK  
USMISSION NATO  
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS  
USDOCOSOUTH

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E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PINT, TU  
SUBJECT: CONTINUING POLITICAL FENCING OVER EARLY ELECTIONS

REF: ANKARA 1290 (181425Z FEB 77)

1. THE PROSPECTS FOR JUNE ELECTIONS REMAIN THE PRIME TOPIC FOR POLITICAL SPECULATION IN TURKEY AS THE TWO MAJOR PARTIES CONTINUE TO DARE EACH OTHER TO COME OUT FORTHRIGHTLY IN FAVOR OF EARLY ELECTIONS. THE JUSTICE PARTY (JP), REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY (RPP), REPUBLICAN RELIANCE PARTY (RR), AND NATIONALIST ACTION PARTY (NAP) HAVE ALL GIVEN QUALIFIED SUPPORT TO EARLY ELECTIONS, AND THE HEAD OF TURK-IS LABOR CONFEDERATION RECENTLY JOINED A LONG LIST OF OTHER PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS

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AND GROUPS PUBLICLY SUPPORTING THE IDEA. THE NATIONAL SALVATION PARTY (NSP) AND THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY (DP) ARE UNALTERABLY OPOSED, HOWEVER, AND ELECTIONS CAN ONLY BE CALLED THROUGH COOPERATION OF THE JP AND RPP -- SOMETHING SO FAR NOT CLEARLY IN PROSPECT.

2. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS AND OUR OWN CONTACTS, JP

PARLIAMENTARIANS WHO RETURNED FROM THEIR CONSTITUENCIES FOR THE JP JOINT GROUP MEETING MARCH 15 REPORTED STRONG SENTIMENT IN JP LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS IN FAVOR OF EARLY ELECTIONS.

JP NATIONAL ASSEMBLY MEMBER SULEYMAN CAGLAR HAS GATHERED 111 SIGNATURES (EQUAL TO TWO-THIRDS OF THE JP ASSEMBLY STRENGTH) FOR HIS MOTION TO BE PRESENTED TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (NA) CALLING FOR EARLY ELECTIONS. PRIMIN DEMIREL ANNOUNCED THAT THE QUESTION WOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE JP GENERAL EXECUTIVE BOARD MARCH 18 AND BY ITS REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY MARCH 19, AND THAT A DECISION ON THE PARTY'S POSITION COULD BE MADE AFTERWARD. IN A SPEECH IN ANTALYA MARCH 16 (AS REPORTED IN MARCH 17 PRESS) DEMIREL TAUNTED RPP LEADER ECEVIT FOR RETREATING FROM EARLIER SUPPORT FOR EARLY ELECTION, SAYING "IT IS HE WHO WANTS TO GET RID OF THE GOVERNMENT, WHO SAYS THERE IS A CRISIS. ELECTION IS THE REMEDY FOR BOTH A NEW GOVERNMENT AND CRISIS. BUT IT IS THE RPP ITSELF WHICH DOES NOT COME AROUND TO ELECTIONS."

3. IN A MARCH 16 PRESS CONFERENCE REPLYING TO DEMIREL'S SPEECH, ECEVIT SAID THAT "NO MATTER WHEN THEY ARE HELD, THE 1977 ELECTIONS WILL REMOVE (THE JP) FROM POWER." ACCORDING TO THE MARCH 17 PRESS, HE SAID, "IF MR, DEMIREL SEES EARLY ELECTIONS AS NECESSARY, LET HIM SAY SO HIMSELF. I HAVE SPOKEN CLEARLY ON THIS SUBJECT, BUT UP TO TODAY IT HAS BEEN IMPOSSIBLE TO UNDERSTAND WHAT THE JP THINKS." ACCORDING TO SOME PAPERS, ECEVIT, ASKED IF HE STILL THOUGHT IT WAS NECESSARY FOR A NEW GOVERNMENT TO TAKE OFFICE TO OVERSEE THE ELECTIONS, REPLIED, "CERTAINLY WE BELIEVE THIS IS NECESSARY AND HAVE SAID IT MANY TIMES. BUT SO FAR THE JP HAS SHOWN NO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CLEAR SIGNS OF ACCEPTING THIS."

4. HALIL TUNC, PRESIDENT OF THE OFFICIALLY UNALIGNED TURK-IS, SAID MARCH 17, "THE LAST CHANCE FOR THE COUNTRY IS EARLY ELECTIONS". THE COUNTRY, HE SAID, IS LIVING THROUGH A CRISIS, ANARCHY HAS BEEN UNLEASHED, AND TURK-IS WILL DO ALL IT CAN TO PERSUADE THE PARTIES TO GO TO THE POLLS EARLY. TUNC CAUTIONED, HOWEVER, THAT A "CREDIBLE, HEALTHY AND SAFE ELECTION CANNOT BE HELD WITH THIS GOVERNMENT IN OFFICE... IT WOULD BE HARMFUL TO GO TO ELECTIONS UNDER THIS INCOHERENT, ANARCHY-SMEARED GOVERNMENT."

5. MUCH OF THE MARCH 17 PRESS ALSO REPORTED A THREAT BY AN UNIDENTIFIED NSP SOURCE THAT THE PARTY WOULD INTRODUCE A CENSURE MOTION IN THE NA IF THE JP WERE TO INTRODUCE A MOTION FOR EARLY ELECTIONS.

6. COMMENT: FOR THE JP TO INTRODUCE AN EARLY ELECTION MOTION WOULD QUITE POSSIBLY BRING THE GOVERNMENT DOWN, SOMETHING

DEMIREL MIGHT BE WILLING TO ACCEPT ONLY IF HE WERE SURE THAT THE MOTION COULD BE PASSED. PASSAGE WOULD REQUIRE A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF RPP VOTES, HENCE THE JP EFFORT TO GOAD THE RPP INTO INTRODUCING THE MEASURE FIRST. HOWEVER, THE SAME FACTORS WHICH MAKE THE JP EAGER FOR EARLY ELECTIONS TEND TO MAKE THE RPP RELUCTANT. THE PUBLIC PRESSURE FOR EARLY ELECTIONS WORKS TO THE JP'S ADVANTAGE. NEVERTHELESS, AT THIS POINT, WE STILL FEEL THAT CHANCES FOR EARLY ELECTIONS ARE TOO CLOSE TO CALL. MACOMBER

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## Message Attributes

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